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Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/71 of 15 December 2016 on follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, the General Assembly:

(a) Underlined the strong support expressed at its high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament, held on 26 September 2013, for taking urgent and effective measures to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons (para. 1);

(b) Called for urgent compliance with the legal obligations and the fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on nuclear disarmament and endorsed the wide support expressed at the high-level meeting for a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons (paras. 2 and 3);

(c) Also called for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction (para. 4);

(d) Requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States with regard to achieving the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in particular on the elements of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-second session, and also to transmit the report to the Conference on Disarmament (para. 14).

2. By notes verbales dated 17 February 2017 and 12 June 2017, Member States were invited to communicate their views on the issue. Replies received from Member States and international organizations as at 31 July 2017 are set out in section II below; replies received thereafter will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs[1] in the language of submission only.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2017]

Argentina will spare no effort to work constructively and to mobilize the broadest possible consensus to reach the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. This is a priority goal of Argentine foreign policy, based on its historic position in support of general and complete disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Accordingly, Argentina will continue to participate in all discussions, forums and negotiations dealing with this objective, with a view to eliminating nuclear weapons throughout the world in an irreversible, transparent and verifiable manner, in the firm belief that the Treaty is the cornerstone of the international legal framework for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Argentina is concerned by the lack of real progress in recent years on nuclear disarmament. In its view, the nuclear Powers should take the lead and honour the commitments made under the Treaty, in particular article VI. Argentina believes that the international community should join efforts to generate fruitful opportunities for dialogue and negotiation between the nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty

[1] www.un.org/disarmament/.

and the non-nuclear-weapon States parties. The review cycle of the Treaty provides an enabling environment for the promotion of joint efforts and an opportunity to overcome divisions within the international community.

Argentina considers that the general and complete elimination of nuclear weapons is the best guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons, thereby avoiding their irrevocable humanitarian consequences.

It is important to highlight that some steps have already been taken towards the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons in order to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. This objective is enshrined in article VI of the Treaty, as it requires parties to pursue the goal of general and complete disarmament and includes the possibility to prohibit nuclear weapons in the future. The applicability and enforceability that article VI has always had, and continues to have, should therefore not be diminished in order to achieve this goal.

However, the Argentine Republic believes that progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons must be made in an effectively verifiable manner that reaffirms the Treaty regime without undermining the achievements already made in the area of non-proliferation.

With regard to verification, Argentina welcomes General Assembly resolution 71/67 and the creation of a group of governmental experts to consider the issue of nuclear disarmament verification within the framework of the United Nations, since it is appropriate to focus on addressing these issues within the mechanisms of the Organization in order for them to contribute to the negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Based on this commitment, Argentina acceded to the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification in May 2016 on the understanding that it provides a real opportunity to move forward in nuclear disarmament. The progress made within this informal mechanism could contribute to future work carried out within the United Nations. For this reason, Argentina hopes that the forthcoming group of governmental experts will take into account the documents and findings produced within this mechanism.

Argentina also played a constructive role in the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. Argentina gave an explanation of vote at the time the text was adopted.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

Brazil is fully committed to the objective of nuclear disarmament, as these weapons constitute the most serious threat to humankind and to international peace and security.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons increases tensions throughout the world, fosters suspicion and hinders cooperation between States. The limited reductions of nuclear weapons made thus far are, unfortunately, offset by the continued modernization and qualitative improvement of nuclear arsenals.

There is a clear compliance deficit on the part of nuclear-weapon States in their commitment under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was reinforced by the outcomes of the Treaty's 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. It is worrisome that at the 2015 Review Conference of the

Parties to the Treaty we could not reach an outcome document that would further build on the consensual Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. Efforts should be made to avoid another such stalemate in the current review cycle.

Brazil is honoured to have actively participated in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This Treaty is a victory of hope over fatalism. It is a collective undertaking aimed at putting human life, dignity and respect at the centre of the global order. It will strengthen and complement existing obligations in the international nuclear regime, in particular article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We invite all those genuinely concerned with nuclear disarmament to sign, ratify and swiftly implement the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Moreover, Brazil is keen to contribute to the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to be convened in 2018 to review the progress made in this regard. It will be a unique opportunity to gather even more support from States and civil society for the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[29 June 2017]

Brunei Darussalam supports disarmament efforts and the non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, at both the regional and global levels. As such, Brunei Darussalam is a party to most of the major regional and global instruments pertaining to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

Brunei Darussalam does not possess nuclear weapons and has no intention of producing or acquiring nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, hence it is in Brunei Darussalam's interest to ensure nuclear disarmament, including by participating in and expressing support for relevant agreements, by sharing information and best practices and by promoting efforts towards confidence-building and transparency measures.

Brunei Darussalam concurs with like-minded States on the general principles of nuclear disarmament and in particular shares their grave concern at the threats posed to humanity by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their potentially destructive uses.

China

[Original: English]
[28 July 2017]

Pursuant to resolution 71/71, the Government of China wishes to submit its views on nuclear disarmament as set out below.

Eliminating the danger of nuclear war by means of the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons and the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world will serve the common interests of humankind.

In the spirit of jointly building a shared future for humankind, the international community should advocate and pursue a common, comprehensive, cooperative and

sustainable security, should fully respect and accommodate the legitimate and reasonable security concerns of all countries, should resolve international disputes by peaceful means and should work together to foster a peaceful and stable international security environment, so as to create the conditions necessary for progress in nuclear disarmament.

It is important to adhere to multilateralism, to maintain and promote the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and to promote in a balanced way the three pillars of the Treaty, namely nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The international community should adhere and give full effect to the role of existing multilateral mechanisms, including the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, so as to provide legal support and institutional guarantees for nuclear disarmament process.

All nuclear-weapon States should undertake publicly not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons and to fulfil in earnest their nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the Treaty.

Nuclear disarmament should follow the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all", and should be pursued in a step-by-step manner, as follows:

(a) The development and deployment of missile defence systems detrimental to global stability, as well as related international cooperation in this regard, should be stopped and abandoned immediately, so as not to hamper international nuclear disarmament efforts;

(b) To prevent the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space will be conducive to maintaining the global strategic balance and stability and to creating the international security environment necessary for nuclear disarmament;

(c) It is also necessary to take pre-emptive arms control measures and to contain the trend of weaponization in the fields of cyberspace and artificial intelligence, so as to prevent a high-technology arms race from aggravating the international strategic imbalance.

Countries that possess the largest nuclear arsenals bear a special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and should take the lead in substantially reducing those arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner, thus creating the conditions necessary for the ultimate goal of general and comprehensive nuclear disarmament. When conditions are ripe, other nuclear-weapon States should also join multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an important step in the nuclear disarmament process. Countries that have not yet done so should sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible so that it may enter into force, as stipulated by relevant provisions, at the earliest opportunity. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, nuclear-weapon States should continue to observe their moratoriums on nuclear tests.

The Conference on Disarmament is the sole appropriate forum for the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Reaching agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament, so as to start the negotiation on a fissile material cut-off treaty on the basis of the Shannon report (CD/1299), is the only feasible way forward. Moreover, the universal participation of all key parties is essential for the preparation and negotiation of the treaty to be effective. The United Nations high-level fissile

material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group should conduct its work in strict accordance with its mandate provided in General Assembly resolution 71/259.

Meanwhile, to reduce the danger of nuclear war and improve the level of mutual trust among States, nuclear-weapon States should:

(a) Reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines, abandon nuclear deterrence policy based on first use of nuclear weapons and commit themselves to no first use of nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances;

(b) Honour their commitments not to target their nuclear weapons at any countries or to identify any countries as targets of nuclear strikes;

(c) Undertake explicitly and unconditionally the commitment not to use or threaten the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones, and negotiate and conclude international legal instruments on the issues of negative security assurances and no-first-use of nuclear weapons;

(d) Support the efforts of relevant countries and regions to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and other weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zones in accordance with regional conditions and on the basis of voluntary consultations and agreements;

(e) Abandon the nuclear umbrella policy and the practice of nuclear sharing. Countries that deploy nuclear weapons abroad should withdraw and repatriate all such weapons;

(f) Take all steps necessary to avoid accidental or unauthorized launches of nuclear weapons.

China actively participated in the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament and voted in favour of resolution 71/71. China supports the commemoration and promotion of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and will positively consider attending the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to be convened in 2018.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[30 May 2017]

Colombia fully complies with the provisions of the main international instruments on nuclear disarmament, recognizes the established international institutions and is firmly committed to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. These are the integral foundations of its foreign policy.

As a non-nuclear-weapon Member State, Colombia reaffirms its respect for and commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its three pillars, which will continue to be the cornerstone supporting all efforts in nuclear disarmament.

Colombia is also a party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which is a landmark treaty at the regional level and which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated region. The Treaty marked its fiftieth anniversary on 14 February 2017 and continues to make an invaluable contribution to regional peace and security and to nuclear non-proliferation worldwide.

Colombia is participating in the negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, using guiding

principles based on its status as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[31 July 2017]

The date of 7 July 2017 will go down in history as a milestone in the quest for universal peace. On that date a conference convened by the General Assembly adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. These weapons, whose devastating consequences for humanity are beyond doubt, will be prohibited by a legally binding universal instrument that will be open for signature by all States. Ecuador actively participated in the process that led to the convening of the negotiating conference for the Treaty and in the negotiations that culminated in its adoption.

The Constitution of Ecuador provides for the promotion of peace and universal disarmament in the conduct of international relations, and condemns the development and use of weapons of mass destruction and the imposition of military bases or facilities by certain States on the territory of others. It also prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, import, transport, transfer and use of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as well as the release of nuclear and toxic waste into national territory. Ecuador is part of the nuclear-weapon-free zone created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. It has also ratified all of the main international instruments related to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, notably the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and additional protocols on safeguards and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It is a matter of particular concern that the nuclear Powers have embarked upon the modernization of their nuclear weapons, and the delivery systems and platforms thereof, and that they have not reduced the role of nuclear weapons in their military doctrines, contradicting both the spirit and the letter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Ecuador regrets that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force due to an ongoing reluctance to ratify it on the part of some States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty. The adoption of the Treaty has made it clear that these weapons are contrary to international law, as its measures include procedures to enable nuclear-weapon States to eliminate nuclear weapons, before or after their accession to the Treaty. Until total elimination is achieved, nuclear-weapon States must in all circumstances refrain from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State by concluding a universal, legally binding instrument on unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable effective security assurances to be provided by nuclear-weapon States to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

It is necessary to continue advocating for the elimination of these weapons in all forums, and Ecuador therefore supports the holding of the annual International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September, and the convening of a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament in 2018.

India

[Original: English]
[11 May 2017]

India supported resolution 71/71 submitted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, in which the General Assembly called for the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines.

The working paper by India on nuclear disarmament (CD/1816) enumerated specific steps, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons; reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines; measures by nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear danger; negotiation of a global agreement among nuclear-weapon States on "no-first-use" of nuclear-weapons; negotiation of a universal and legally binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States; negotiation of a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; and negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame.

India considers the Conference on Disarmament as the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament through the establishment of a subsidiary body with a mandate agreed by consensus as part of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work.

India joined the statements on behalf of the Group of 21, made in the Conference on Disarmament in March 2014, September 2014, March 2015, June 2015, August 2015, March 2016, May 2016 and March 2017, calling for urgent commencement of negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament, in particular on a comprehensive convention to prohibit the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and to provide for their destruction.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

In the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is no absolute guarantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons other than their total elimination. Nuclear disarmament is an obligation that cannot be replaced by nuclear-weapon reductions and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, or by any other arrangement or mechanism short of the total, irreversible and internationally verifiable elimination of all nuclear weapons globally, in accordance with a universal, legally binding instrument that also ensures that they will never be produced again.

As unanimously concluded by the International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion of 8 July 1996, taking all necessary practical measures for the total elimination of all nuclear weapons worldwide, including to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control, is a legal obligation to which all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are committed under its article VI. It is imperative that the obligations under article VI, the accomplishment of which is neither conditional nor optional, be urgently fulfilled in order to remove the threat posed to humanity by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and to prevent the further frustration of non-nuclear-weapon States and the consistent erosion of the validity, effectiveness and credibility of the Treaty.

Iran stresses the need to preserve the momentum on nuclear disarmament created, in part, by the first-ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament and by the three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons held in 2013 and 2014. In this context, while underlining the importance of the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination (New York, 27-31 March and 15 June-7 July 2017), which resulted in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Iran highlights the significance of the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to be convened in 2018 to review the progress made in this regard.

To complement this process, Iran emphasizes the importance of the urgent and full implementation of the provisions of Assembly resolution 68/32, in which the Assembly, among other things, called for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction. Iran strongly holds that such a comprehensive convention is the only practical way to achieve the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and can, in no way, be replaced by unilateral or bilateral initiatives or other similar arrangements.

While reiterating its support for the urgent commencement of negotiations for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, Iran is of the view that such a convention, as a universal, non-discriminatory, legally binding instrument, inter alia, should:

(a) Prohibit forever, without exception and under any circumstances, research on, and the development, testing, production, possession, acquisition, transfer, transit, retention, stockpiling and use or threat of use of, all types of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices worldwide;

(b) Set, within a phased programme, a clear and unalterable deadline for the total elimination of all types of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices worldwide;

(c) Prohibit forever, without exception and under any circumstances, research on, and the production, possession, acquisition, transfer, transit, retention, and stockpiling of, any amount of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices worldwide;

(d) Set, within a phased programme, a clear and unalterable deadline for the total elimination of, or the conversion to material usable exclusively for peaceful purposes of, all existing fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices worldwide;

(e) Prohibit forever, without exception and under any circumstances, the planning for, or the construction of, any installation or facility relating to research on, and the development or production of, any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device worldwide;

(f) Set, within a phased programme, a clear and unalterable deadline for the total destruction of all the installations or facilities relating to research on, and the development or production of, any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device worldwide;

(g) Prohibit forever, without exception and under any circumstances, any kind of direct or indirect cooperation in, or assistance to, or encouragement or inducement of, any activity prohibited under the convention or incompatible, in any way, with its object and purpose;

(h) Confirm, explicitly, that its main objective is to ensure that, under any circumstances, there is no type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device, no fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and no installation or facility relating to research on, or the development or production of, any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device or any activity prohibited under the convention or incompatible, in any way, with its object and purpose worldwide;

(i) Establish a robust international verification mechanism to ensure the total absence of any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device, any amount of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or any installation or facility relating to research on, or the development or production of, any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device or any other activity prohibited under the convention or incompatible, in any way, with its object and purpose, and to ensure the sustainability of such a situation worldwide under all circumstances;

(j) Be of indefinite duration and enter into force after its ratification by all those who possess nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and installations or facilities relating to research on, or the production of, any type of nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device, or are engaged in any other activity prohibited under the convention or incompatible, in any way, with its object and purpose.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[24 April 2017]

Lebanon reaffirms the following:

Lebanon does not possess or produce weapons of mass destruction. It complies with the United Nations resolutions in that regard and is opposed to the legality of the threat or use of such weapons.

It welcomes and supports all initiatives aimed at bringing about general and complete disarmament, especially in the Middle East, and emphasizes that the region should be free of weapons of mass destruction. It is, however, concerned at the failure of Israel to comply with international law. Israel maintains a nuclear arsenal that constitutes a constant threat to all the States of the region and consequently to international peace and security.

It is essential for the Arab States to continue to call for the establishment of a region free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, because that is the only available option for coping with the dangers that the nuclear armaments of Israel and its other weapons of mass destruction represent for international peace and Arab national security.

The international community should continue to demand that all States in the region, including Israel, should sign treaties on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[10 July 2017]

In view of the current international situation, the United Nations is convinced that nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons are the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The contribution of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, academia, parliamentarians and the mass media, plays an important role in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Pending the adoption of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, immediate compliance with the legal obligations and fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on nuclear disarmament are essential. It is necessary to review progress on the actions proposed during the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament. A preparatory committee for the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament should be established to collect all proposals from Member States, as well as public opinion, regarding the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Despite its status as a non-nuclear-weapon State, Madagascar should be involved in the different stages of negotiations that will lead to a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention. Furthermore, active participation in the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons is vital. This should involve all means of educational and public awareness-raising activities at the national and international levels on the threats posed by nuclear weapons.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[30 May 2017]

Mexico believes that the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, which was held on 26 September 2013, revealed the strong desire of a large majority of States for the United Nations to immediately address an issue that was the subject of the first General Assembly resolution in 1946: the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mexico is conscious of the devastating short- and long-term effects that an intentional or accidental nuclear detonation would have on the population and the environment at the regional and global levels. For Mexico, striving for nuclear disarmament means defending and strengthening the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as complying with the constitutional principles that govern its foreign policy.

Mexico has pressed for the full and complete elimination of nuclear weapons under strict international control and in line with the principles of irreversibility,

verification and transparency in order to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In an effort to promote initiatives to achieve this aim, Mexico and 15 other countries issued a joint statement in 2012 on the humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons. This led to the creation of the Humanitarian Initiative, a result of the frustration of non-nuclear-weapon States and civil society at the lack of meaningful progress towards nuclear disarmament.

For Mexico, the subject of nuclear weapons had always been addressed from a political and legal perspective, without taking into account their seriously harmful effects. Mexico and the other States leading the Humanitarian Initiative therefore agreed to contribute to the stigmatization of nuclear weapons — on the basis of hard factual data on the impact of their use — as a step towards their prohibition and elimination.

The Humanitarian Initiative led to three Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in 2013 and in Nayarit, Mexico, and Vienna in 2014, which scientifically addressed the catastrophic consequences of accidental or intentional nuclear detonations as well as the risks from the mere existence of nuclear weapons to the environment, ecosystems, climate stability, development, global health and food security.

At the Vienna Conference, participants agreed on steps to fill the legal gap for the stigmatization and prohibition of nuclear weapons (the Austrian Pledge) with a view to their elimination, taking into account the harm that would result from any nuclear detonation. The international community was invited to join the movement. In January 2015, at the initiative of Mexico, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States became the first regional body to endorse the Austrian Pledge, which received support from 127 countries and became known as the Humanitarian Pledge.

As a step forward and within the framework of the First Committee, Mexico, together with Austria, Ireland and South Africa, supported General Assembly resolution 70/33 entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", which established an open-ended working group whose mandate was to address new legal norms and measures on nuclear disarmament.

The open-ended working group was convened in 2016 in Geneva (the first session was held in February, the second session in May and the third session in August). In its final report, the working group recommended convening a conference in 2017 to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. The General Assembly adopted resolution 71/258, co-sponsored by Mexico, which implements this recommendation.

Mexico took part in the first session of the conference convened pursuant to resolution 71/258, which was held from 27 to 31 March 2017, in the belief that the prohibition of nuclear weapons could be achieved after an impasse of 21 years, in which negotiations aimed at prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons had not commenced.

Mexico welcomes the convening of the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons.

Mexico believes that this negotiation:

(a) Is consistent with the obligation contained in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, thereby contributing to compliance with it;

(b) Will not substitute for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, since the specific implementation of a such a treaty will not undermine the regime of the other. Both instruments will complement each other, thereby strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Mexico has three clear goals in the negotiation of a legally binding instrument:

(c) The negotiation process must be simple and efficient. Mexico will look favourably on any initiative that leads to this goal and avoids distractions from processes which also complement the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime;

(d) The text of the treaty must be brief, clear and focused on the core purpose of prohibiting the use, acquisition, stockpiling, development, transfer and stationing or deployment of nuclear weapons, and also on the participation and assistance of its States parties, or inducement to participate, in any activity prohibited by this treaty;

(e) The treaty must be inclusive and open to all States, including States parties and States that are not parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, nuclear-weapon States and States under the nuclear umbrella.

In short, Mexico believes that the prohibition treaty would be a global extension to the various treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The prohibition of nuclear weapons contributes to the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime but it will only be one part of the process towards the full and complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It will be complementary to other processes that are of high priority for the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

A prohibition treaty that is consistent with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will contribute to the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations by ensuring that such disarmament is irreversible.

Mexico will continue participating in the second session of the negotiating conference, which will be held from 15 June to 7 July in New York.

Netherlands

[Original: English]
[23 May 2017]

The Kingdom of the Netherlands herewith submits the view of the Government of the Netherlands on the issues covered by resolution 71/71.

The Netherlands wishes to emphasize that it fully shares the ultimate goal of the resolution, a world free of nuclear weapons. The Netherlands participated in the ministerial level in the 2013 high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament, during which various perspectives on how to best achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world were discussed.

The Netherlands notes with regret that the resolution reflects only one particular viewpoint, while various other proposals made at the high-level meeting were not captured by the resolution.

As stated in the explanation of vote that was read by the delegation of the Netherlands on behalf of a group of like-minded countries during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the resolution includes no clear references to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, while the Netherlands would

have very much preferred a broader reference to the Treaty and an emphasis on its pivotal importance to nuclear disarmament.

The Netherlands also stands by its questions raised on the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to be convened in 2018. The Netherlands feels that the importance of international efforts on nuclear disarmament is insufficiently emphasized by processes that are, in scope and intention, insufficiently clear and transparent. This will prevent key States from participating and is detrimental to the international trust on which successful disarmament is based. Instead, we should focus our efforts on making progress in the context of the Treaty.

The Netherlands further regrets that, by focusing on one core element of the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the resolution does not do justice to the urgent attention that needs to be paid to the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work for the Conference and other core issues. The Netherlands also believes that starting negotiations on a nuclear-weapon convention without the participation of the States that possess nuclear weapons will not advance the overall goal of nuclear disarmament.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[11 April 2017]

The State of Qatar reaffirms that there should be a comprehensive convention that prohibits the possession of nuclear weapons and mandates complete nuclear disarmament. The proposed convention, which should include a comprehensive verification regime, would prohibit the production, development, possession and use of nuclear weapons and would oblige nuclear-weapon States to destroy their stockpiles in phases by removing those weapons from high-alert status, gathering them from their places of deployment, removing the warheads from their delivery systems, disabling them by removing the nuclear explosive material and fissile material and ensuring that such materials are permanently converted into a state in which they can be used only for peaceful purposes and cannot be repurposed for use in nuclear warheads. The convention would also prohibit the production of fissile material, namely, highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium, which are required to produce nuclear weapons. The convention must furthermore provide for the establishment of an agency to ensure that States comply with the provisions convention, with a view to ensuring the total elimination of nuclear weapons.